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MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1913.

# THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Students the country over will shed no tears at the report that Congress plans an investigation of the autonomy of the Library of Congress. Even those who have wearied of unending inquiries into every department of government will feel that a hearing regarding the control of the people's books will do much good.

Conditions may have changed for the better during the last few years, although the same librarian is in charge, but five years ago a serious student who went to the library was treated as though he were a potential pick-pocket.

If he was unable to find from the ponderous card catalogue the titles of the books he wanted, and asked permission to enter the stockroom, he was regarded as little short of mad. And if he finally procured this concession, he was shadowed as though he meant to cart away some score or more priceless volumes.

Particularly was this the case in the Division of Official Publications, where were kept the documents issued by the State government. We have known inquiries at that division to be treated most cavalierly, and to be escorted back to the main reading-room practically under arrest. Happily this suspicion and discourtesy did not extend in all parts of the library; in the newspaper division were a number of young assistants who seemed anxious to serve investigators, and in the division of manuscripts a properly accredited student was given every possible facility. In the main, however, the atmosphere was so disagreeable and the official insolence so marked that the student lingered no longer than was necessary. Even the Adjutant-General's office was scarcely worse.

We appreciate the necessity of safeguarding that magnificent collection of books which belongs to the people of the United States, and we dare say many respectable persons have purchased or damaged books. But this is no excuse for autocracy or universal suspicion toward all comers. The books belong not to the librarian, but to the people, and all of them should be made accessible to men who come for serious study.

In those days there were numerous explanations for the unimpaired bearing of some of the people's servants in the library, but as these were not always specific, they need not be repeated. They will, however, probably take tangible form and be traced to a single official if an investigation be made.

It is a thousand pities that these books should be so far removed from the people. Were they made more generally available to an extension of the library, and were they placed in the hands of men who really wish to know, the library might enter upon a new career of usefulness.

What chance has the City Jail of getting together with the "Success" as a warning to the world?

General Sherman would have chosen a different synonym for the infernal regions had he ever spent Saturday night in a newspaper office.

What is the use of stretching limbs wire along the Rio Grande in an effort to keep out Mexican soldiers who have been living on stolen cattle?

Why do we send park-keepers to collect old citizens in the ranks of the military? Is it to make them feel like old soldiers?

We fancy that church which offers free huts for Sunday will have a fine congregation.

All the same, we would not like to receive the Christmas present villa promises Huria.

We wonder if the "United States America" has called, that our foreign policy is "British sentiment" and he handled the big stick.

The man who can't be happy with a breakfast of country sausage and Virginia buckwheat might as well emigrate to Mexico and be done with it.

There will be no more candidates for Governor of Texas during the present campaign. Number twelve has already been reached.

Governor Glynn insists he will not ally himself with any faction, but how can Suber's successor and anything but factions since the war?

The General Assembly is the main Santa Claus in Virginia, but it can't begin to fill the stockings of the departments and institutions this year.

No other State will have so many native sons and daughters to come home for Christmas as Old Virginia.

Despite the indorsement given to grape-juice by Secretary of State Bryan, kassatras too is destined to become the national beverage.

"Root for President," says a headline. Everybody's been rooting for Wilson ever since he went into office.

## THE FINANCIAL GRAB.

No wonder the Senate Finance Committee adjourned Saturday. Had they thrown up their hands in despair and declined to attempt the drafting of an appropriation bill we should not have blamed them.

Exactly what the press of the State predicted has come to pass. Precisely what every well-informed voter anticipated has been fulfilled. That little surplus in the treasury has stirred the boards of every institution and every department to attempt a grab. During the few days the committee was in session requests were made for almost \$2,000,000 more than the Assembly can hope to provide.

Did these requests represent crying needs, we should regret the inability of the State to meet them. But as it is, some of the statements filed with the committee contain everything that the boards dream of procuring in years to come. They felt that the times were ripe for large appropriations, and they decided to pluck when they might.

Not only so, but unless the condition of some of our State institutions is far different from what we have observed on more or less frequent visits, some of these "statements of needs" are heavily padded. This, we presume, is due to that philosophy which teaches that the best way to get a liberal appropriation is to ask for an absurd one.

But whether they represent gross padding or wild dreaming, the extravagance and unreasonableness of some of these requests is deeply to be deplored. How can we ever hope to establish a sound fiscal policy of general development if every board and every department asks for more than it knows it can get or will give no accurate estimate of its immediate needs? Were we on the Finance Committee we confess that we should feel disposed to deny any increase to any board which is unreasonable in its demands. This policy, if agreed upon, might reduce to proper figures the inflated estimates of some of the boards.

But our readers will probably ask why it is, even with allowance for all this padding, our expenses of government promise to be heavier than ever before. Within bounds, the answer is not difficult to give. Automatically, under the present organic law of the State, a considerable percentage of that revenue derived from new assessments goes directly to the support of the public schools. Thus, while we may seem to have more money in the treasury, we are forced to devote a very large part of it to the fundamental work of education. A study of the Auditor's reports will show that the largest single item of increase has been this one, which no lover of the State will regret.

Along with this have been larger appropriations for causes dear to the people—notably, for public health, the treatment of tuberculosis and the like. With none of these expenditures will the average well-informed citizen find fault. In the same way, practically every activity of government has grown with the people, and has become more expensive.

It is our firm belief that most of the excess in the budget since 1903 has been well spent. But this increases rather than diminishes our present responsibility. If we have been provident, we must be economical, if we have invested wisely in the past, we cannot now too sternly frown upon the efforts to lead the State into extravagant and ill-tempered ventures. We must watch and ward more carefully than ever.

## WORSHIPING "MONA LISA."

After all it is but a step from the Athenian of the age of Pericles and the man of today. Sandpaper the venerable, rub off the acquired conventionalities of a few centuries, and your twentieth century citizen thinks and believes very much as did his distant kinsman of the Aegian.

Witness. When the triumphant Greeks returned across the seas in their long galleys and brought ashore the statues snatched from alien shrines, the people thronged the streets and watched the long procession move. And when the new work of art was placed by reverent hands within the temple of their goddess, men bowed down and worshiped Beauty. What mattered it if a free people had been dedicated to an enemy destroyed what pointed the weary slaves in the harbor? why reckon the golden troths in the treasury? why boast of valor? the statues captured were more valuable than these. A victory was only a victory, but a marble had a soul.

Yesterday in Rome men forced the triumphal parade to the Vatican and the triumphal march of the approach of the triumphal march, forced to work, to worship, to play, and bowed before "Mona Lisa."

"Mona Lisa," in Paris, whether the masterpiece of the Van Dyck is to be returned on Christmas Day, the vandals are already waiting. In the Louvre, before the picture is hung once more in the Salle Carrée, a special room has been set apart where the admirers of La Gioconda, unimpeded by lesser altitudes, can view her smile. "We have made plans," announces Curator Paul Legendre, with the utmost frankness, "which will enable us to handle a crowd of half a million persons the opening day." As for the chthonic goddess of "Mona Lisa" who are hands?

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## JUSTICE, NEW AND OLD.

We wonder how many of those who declaim against our present chicken-hearted justice and seek a return to the "old law" know the real workings of the system to which they would have us revert.

Some evidence of its horrors and its injustice may be gathered from "Howard's State Trials"—that great collection of the most memorable proceedings in English law. There, century by century, are published reports of the evidence, the examination and the treatment of men cited before the courts. To go no further back in this great work, one can form a very positive opinion of the "old law" by reading those thrilling trials that marked the English Revolution—the perjury of Titus Oates, the execution of Monmouth, the Bloody Assizes, the conspiracy against William.

When Monmouth was led to death, he pleaded in vain with the executioner to wield his axe promptly and effectively, yet before the eyes of thousands, the wretch smote Monmouth seven times with a knife. Every possible cruelty that could be practiced found favor—was, indeed, enjoined by special order of King James.

Even worse than the inhumanity of the executions was the injustice of the trials. The case of Lady Alice Lisle, which Macaulay describes in a memorable passage, was typical of what happened in a hundred instances, and was worse than other trials only because of Jeffrey's bullying and the age of the accused. When this godly woman was arraigned for harboring two Presbyterian fugitives, she was denied counsel, and, though deaf, was forced to examine her witnesses unaided. A jury that twice sought to acquit her was browbeaten into finding a verdict of guilty.

A little later, even after the great William set upon the throne, procedure was almost as unjust. In the famous case of Charrook, King and Keyes, three of the conspirators against the King, were cited for high treason, but were denied counsel, and even a copy of the indictment.

None, of course, would return to this order, but that which succeeded it and remained in force until the beginning of the nineteenth century was scarcely better. Capital punishment—the penalty for 160 offenses in Blackstone's day—was still so common a century ago that the judges on circuit wore of writing the two Latin words of the execution order, and contented themselves with subscribing two letters above their own names. There was no cry in those days that indictments failed and that murderers went free. Of course not. Scarcely a man who was accused escaped. The accused was a marked man as long as he lived, a miracle of mercy.

Our justice occasionally breaks down. Delay too long it certainly does. Discriminate it sometimes may. But even at this we should thank God. Blackstone's dictum for the justice of the law can never be shaken.

## WHY OPPOSE SPOSSARD?

The Clinton Force Review states that forces are at work to prevent the elevation of Mr. Sposard to the head of the House Committee on Finance. It gives as the reason for this Mr. Sposard's known sympathy with the elementary schools of the State as opposed to the institutions for higher education, and it declares that the friends of the latter are uniting to defeat him.

We have heard rumors to this effect, but have never regarded them seriously. Mr. Sposard is the ranking member of the committee, now that Colonel Bowman has died and Mr. Jennings has been defeated. To replace him would be to violate a precedent of long standing—a precedent that has long operated to keep politics from committee appointments.

Besides, the Times-Dispatch does not think a plan to oust Mr. Sposard is fair. It is true that he is a somewhat original mind, which has not always approved measures, which the majority has regarded as wise and timely. It is also true that Mr. Sposard has been independent in some of his votes, and has not considered himself bound in any way by the action of his committee. Yet, these things should not deny him fair treatment.

For our part, we hope and believe that the responsibility placed upon him as chairman of this important committee will arouse him to the greater needs of the Commonwealth. At the very least, he should not be condemned unheard or made the victim of a new policy shaped merely to strike him. If Mr. Sposard does not make a worthy chairman, let his opponents fight him in the committee and on the floor. But let them in the meantime give him a fair chance.

North Carolinians refer to North Carolina as "Down Home," but to Virginia as "at home."

A dearth in the corn-cob pipe crop is reported from Missouri, but why should any one use such an instrument when everybody knows that a penny clay bowl and a fir stem make the best combination in the world?

It looks as if this will be the happiest Christmas ever spent in Richmond, and we certainly hope it will be.

The Clinch Valley News complains that extracts from its columns have been ascribed to other newspapers. Not by us. The Clinch Valley News has a distinctiveness all its own that we do not believe we could fail to discern.

The statement has lately been made that there are but 30,000 pilots in New York. Harry Thaw's escape reduced the quality as well as the quantity.

The St. Louis dentist who stole gold filling out of the molar of his woman patient takes rank with the felon of an eminent Columbia, S. C., family, who pawned his great-grandfather's favorite set of false teeth.

## Voice of the People

The Carabao Banquet. Oh, the Carabao lately gave a banquet. There was singing, there was merriment and mirth. And beneath the starry flag they asserted with a brag, They're the only civilizers of the earth.

CHORUS. Poor, poor, poor Carabao! They're up against it good and strong. But, dear old Uncle Sam, never mind their little rags, They're good fellows and they didn't mean no wrong.

Very naturally the army is for fighting. Very naturally the navy thinks it right. For to them the Doves of Peace are the little birds of kind of geese, And the earth is just a place for them to fight.

CHORUS. Sad, sad, sad old Carabao! Sam, Sam, Sam, get 'em ending dirt. They have chewed their little rags, they have had their little jags, But I'm sure they didn't mean no hurt.

We have covered them with epaulets and laces. Upholstered them with sashes and We've prescribed their cocky dresses and little cocky messes. So we mustn't mind their little cocky words.

Dear, dear, dear old Carabao! CHORUS. Sam, we know that they are true. Let this trouble be dismissed, alas, then, gently on the wrist. And, for pity's sake, if they promise to behave, THOMAS LOMAX HUNTER, King George, Va.

Would Unlock Virginia. To the Editor of the Times-Dispatch: Sir—Monday's editorial, "Unlock Alaska," quotes from Woodrow Wilson's message to Congress.

You say that the natural God-given wealth of Alaska has been unexplored and unexploited, and you intimate that it ought to have something done to it.

Now, why should Woodrow Wilson or the Times-Dispatch so far abroad for opportunities to unlock natural God-given wealth? Alaska is about 5,000 miles from Virginia. But here in old Virginia we have quite a lot of natural resources, the main factor in the production of that thing called "wealth" by the professor of economics.

I mean that Virginia has a lot of land lying idle (or partly used); a lot of paying land and timber land; a lot of water power, and a lot of service franchises that are undeveloped, and all because the conditions of public policy foster and encourage the "land monopoly" and speculation in the natural God-given resources of the community.

Alas, another public asset which is now "locked up" (that is, it is locked up to every one but the privileged few) is the land. The land is the most valuable asset discovered in the economic and mechanical increase in value of the "ground rents" in our cities. Our people do not know the fact about the great increase in "land values."

Those who do know are keeping it quiet and saving it. And in every city and town the men of the land are getting 50 to 100 per cent on the value of the land in speculation in city lots and so-called "farms" (?) lying around the city.

At the same time the Legislature is blind to the fact that a single acre of land, which is a public asset, is being sold for \$100,000. Why are the members so blind? Why can't they see the key that will unlock the door to the land? Why can't they see the key that will unlock the door to the land?

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## WHEN A FELLER NEEDS A FRIEND.



## Views of the Virginia Editors

### The New Legislature.

With the new year will assemble in Richmond the representatives from the various counties and cities of the Commonwealth, to enact such laws as they may deem the people of the State need. For the most part, the House of Delegates will be composed of new men, inexperienced in legislation work, but anxious to serve the wishes of their constituents to whom they are directly responsible. There are many, especially in the Eastern section of the State, who show a tendency to belittle the work of the Legislature, and express the sentiment that it is unwise that they meet biennially. This is on the theory that we have too many laws, and that the change of statutes so often causes unrest and dissatisfaction.

No one can deny that many foolish acts find their way on our statute books, and these laws are of both a special and general nature. "In the natural course of events, it could not be otherwise. When the short session is considered, however, as well as the change of statutes so often causes unrest and dissatisfaction. No one can deny that many foolish acts find their way on our statute books, and these laws are of both a special and general nature. "In the natural course of events, it could not be otherwise. When the short session is considered, however, as well as the change of statutes so often causes unrest and dissatisfaction.

At the last session of the Legislature one measure, State-wide prohibition, consumed practically half of the sixty-day session, leaving for consideration of the rest of the time. Of the hundreds of bills proposed, it was a matter of impossibility that each should receive due consideration in the committee room and during the sessions. As a result, many bills were hurriedly passed that was to have been expected.

That was to die on the calendar. Little else could have been expected when discussion of one question overshadowed all others in a short sixty-day session.

In this session, which will convene in January, there are many great questions to be considered. By reason of the lapse of years ago and the fact that the personnel of the Senate remains practically unchanged, it is believed that the "enabling act" question will not consume so much time, and there is a little doubt but that another vote will be taken.

The really great question to be decided will be tax reform, and many and various will be the bills offered for this purpose. Whether it will take the form of aggregations tax, commission, or an assessment of the counties and cities, remains to be seen, but this is the real live issue in the State at this time. Any scheme for an assessment of real estate can be made effective by 1915, as the present assessment will remain in force until that time, and unless some remedy is furnished for the present intolerable conditions at this session, they will have to remain the same, so far as assessments on real estate are concerned, until 1923. It is almost unthinkable that this will be the case.

In addition to this, there are other questions of hardly less importance to be considered. Take it as you please, the Legislature has great work to do and little time within which to do it. They deserve commendation for their efforts. Instead of abuse, and sympathy instead of criticism.—Emporia Messenger.

### Save the Birds.

If the farmers of Virginia would only stop to think of the many new insects that now devastate their crops, they would protect their birds. Birds are the natural enemies of the insects, and by posting their lands, in case other means failed.

Fortunately, however, other means may soon be available to save the birds, if every one interested will ask their members of the State Legislature to support the Wise bill, which will be introduced in the General Assembly in 1914. This bill, prepared by Captain Jennings C. Wise, of the Virginia Military Institute, is modeled after the Federal Migratory Bird Conservation Act, which was passed by Congress in 1913. This bill, which failed of passage last year, would protect the birds of the State, and would also protect the game supply, the economy benefit of the enactment of this law to protect the farmers' crops demands its passage, and on behalf of the farmers of this section, the Republican newspaper for the cordial support of the Senators and Delegates of the Southwest.—South Boston News.

### The Blessings of Experimentation.

Under the heading, "Animals or Men," the Richmond Times-Dispatch of December 19, 1913, contained a most admirable editorial about the hysterical attacks made recently by the anti-vivisectionists. The editorial pointed out in a most convincing manner the value of the experiments of great physicians, which have done so much for the prevention and cure of disease. The Times-Dispatch gives the following instances of great cures, and especially, the prevention of disease, obtained by experimentation on animals, to-wit: that smallpox and the best horse disease, diphtheria, antitoxin, yellow fever antitoxin, typhoid antitoxin and other antitoxins or vaccine matters are obtained by animal vivisection. What is a brute to a man? We agree with the Times-Dispatch that it is useless to argue with those "Ephraims" who belong to their idols' place animals above men. We know of men who think more of a dog than of a man, more of a cat than of a child, God made them that way, why, we have never been able to discover. What we do know is that the lives of men and animals are of more value than the life of the dog or the cat or the horse in the world. And yet we believe in the S. P. C. A., and in the prosecution of those who violate the laws of the S. P. C. A., and in the place of the animal ahead of the human being, it is sickly, sloping sentimentality and they deserve a calling down. And the tens of them eat dog meat, and a lot is superior to a dog any day.—Northern Neck News.

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